WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of detecting moisture or wetness, comprising:

(i) use of a composite material which contains at least one water-soluble decoloring agent and at least one methine dye whose color disappears upon reaction with the decoloring agent in a state that the decoloring agent and the dye are spatially isolated from each other, and

(ii) detection of a history of contact with moisture or water by disappearance of color from the composite material.

2. A label for detecting moisture or wetness, comprising a support coated with at least one water-soluble decoloring agent and at least one methine dye whose color disappears upon reaction with the decoloring agent in a state that the decoloring agent and the dye are spatially isolated from each other.

3. An article having a moisture/wetness detecting function, which is fitted with a moisture- or water-detecting component comprising a support coated with at least one water-soluble decoloring agent and at least one methine dye whose color disappears upon reaction with the decoloring agent in a state that the decoloring agent and the dye are spatially isolated from each other.

4. A material for detection of contact with a liquid, a liquid vapor or both, comprising at least one decoloring agent and at least one colorant whose color disappears upon

reaction with the decoloring agent in a state that decoloring reaction is prevented from proceeding, wherein the decoloring reaction between part or all of the colorant and the decoloring agent is caused upon contact with the liquid, the liquid vapor or both in which at least either the decoloring agent or the colorant is soluble to result in disappearance of the colorant's color and enables the detection of contacts with the liquid, the liquid vapor or both.

5. The detecting material according to claim 4, comprising a detecting layer comprising at least one layer comprising the decoloring agent and the colorant in a state that the decoloring agent and the colorant are spatially isolated from each other, wherein at least a part of the detecting layer loses or changes its color upon contact with a liquid, a liquid vapor or both in which at least either the decoloring agent or the colorant is soluble.

6. The detecting material according to claim 5, wherein the detecting layer comprises a decoloring agent layer containing the decoloring agent and a colorant layer containing the colorant.

7. The detecting material according to claim 6, wherein both decoloring agent layer and colorant layer further comprise a binder capable of absorbing the liquid, the liquid vapor or both.

8. The detecting material according to claim 7, wherein the liquid is water and the binder is gelatin.

9. The detecting material according to claim 6, further comprising a member for leaving a space between the decoloring agent layer and the colorant layer in a state that the liquid, the liquid vapor or both is capable of permeating through the member.

10. The detecting material according to claim 6, further comprising an interlayer that is sandwiched between the decoloring agent layer and the colorant layer and has channels leading to both the decoloring agent layer and the colorant layer.

11. The detecting material according to claim 10, wherein the interlayer has a thickness of 0.1 to 100 μm.

12. The detecting material according to claim 5, further comprising underneath or inside the detecting layer a display plane bearing characters, drawings or both, and enabling the characters, drawings or both to get visual recognition when a part or all of the detecting layer loses its color.

13. The detecting material according to claim 4, wherein the colorant is a methine dye or an azomethine dye.

14. A method of detecting at least one of a storage history, a use history and a transportation history of an article, wherein the article is fitted with the detecting material according to claim 4 and, after at least one of storage, use and transportation, undergoes check to see whether the detecting material loses or changes its color or not.